

1991

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Reminiscences
of My Life
by

William Lawton
Brannen
(1893-1991)



Smith C. Banks
Editor
Bulloch County Historical
Society

Photo Identification Page 16.

REMINISCENCES OF MY LIFE

by

William Lawton Brannen

(We are indebted to Mrs. Geneva Brannen for this article. She wrote down and later transcribed this material after it was dictated to her by Mr. Brannen sometime in 1975-76. This article was edited by Smith C. Banks in 1991.)

I, William Lawton Brannen, am the eighth child in my family, and the last of six boys living, along with two of five sisters, Eula, Mrs. Frank Collins (formerly Mrs. T. B. Swinson), also my youngest sister, Manona, Mrs. Lewis A. Akins. This makes a total of 242 years our Good Lord has blessed us to live.

I want to acknowledge my pleasure in honoring my father, James Gross Brannen, and my mother, Ursula Amanda Rogers Brannen, for their love and affection. My father was born Aug. 11, 1855. He died Nov. 19, 1941. My mother was born July 24, 1857 and died Aug. 15, 1933.

My father and mother were married Sept. 30, 1880. They began housekeeping in a two room house with a dirt-floored kitchen. Mother did her cooking over a fire in the kitchen fireplace. It was not long before they built a seven room house. We lived in it until 1904 when we built the new house now standing. In the beginning they had to clear all the land they were to cultivate. For fencing, it was necessary to split rails from the trees they were cutting to clear the land. They did the rail splitting at night, with mother holding a light made from lightwood splinters so father could see how to split the rails.

Some time after he built his first frame house he put a firm mark on the floor of the dining room, so (that) when the sun's rays paralleled the mark on the floor it was eleven o'clock in the morning. This was probably before he bought a time piece of any kind. He also installed a large bell so mother could let him know when the noon meal was ready to be served, as he might be some distance from the house, and only the bell could be heard at times.

As their family grew, it was necessary to buy large quantities of groceries. At that time, flour was ground and put in wood barrels weighing about 196 pounds. Father would not buy less than one barrel, and usually bought as much as five barrels at a time.

My father was 37 years, 5 months, and 23 days old when I was born. He was a man admired by all who knew him. He was a very stern father, having slapped me twice, and used the

whip only one time during my life. but I knew when he spoke it was his intent to have his children obey.

He was a farmer by trade, but he always had something for us boys to do. He installed a cotton gin, a grist mill, a saw mill, a planing machine, and other things to keep us busy. All the machinery was under a roof, so on rainy days we could be sawing lumber or ginning cotton.

He seldom was free from debt until most of the eleven children were grown and away on their careers of life.

It was necessary to make several trips to Savannah each year to take such produce to market as they had grown, and to buy the coffee, sugar, flour, and a few other articles for their consumption. The trip to Savannah by horse cart usually took four days. This was necessary as no stores were located in Statesboro that could supply any and all they needed for proper eating and wearing.

In planning these trips to Savannah, two or more men would send wagons or carts in a party, as it was better protection to have several traveling together. I remember Father telling how much safer it was in this manner. About 6 miles from Savannah there was a dismal swamp almost a mile wide, and usually, quite a bit of water. When the horses were splashing through this water, it was impossible to hear all that was going on. Quite often, the Indians who had hiding places beside the swampy road would step behind the loaded wagons, and pull a nice ham or whatever they could spy that met their appetites from the wagon and immediately step back behind their hiding places. If any wagon arriving in the market at Savannah was short of any of their produce, they knew someone had stolen part of their cargo. This also happened on their return trip through the swamp. In most cases the wagons were loaded with merchandise of some kind which had been bought for use or consumption when they returned home.

On these trips to Savannah, it was necessary to spend one night going and one night between their homes and Savannah, returning. At times, there could be many groups camping at the same location. In some instances there might have been some drinking going on, as it was not uncommon for most parties to have a little stimulant, as it could have been called. Many lasting friendships were made at these campings.

My father's delight on Sunday mornings, several times each year, was to sit at the piano and play and sing for possibly an hour or more. He had taught singing schools before he and mother married.

He delighted in inviting most of the visitors at

Bethlehem Church to his home for dinner on the Sunday they held their meeting, since their custom was to have services once a month on the third Sunday, and the Saturday before. On one Sunday after the worship service, we had 53 extra mules or horses in our horse lot for feeding. I remember so well, as I was seated at the table for my dinner, I looked toward the West, and the sun was going down. There were probably 75 guests at our home that day for dinner.

In his and mother's church lives, they were very attentive to church. However, they did not unite with the church until late in life. But, having been so prompt in going, most everybody thought they had been members most of their lives at Bethlehem Church. The church is 3 miles west of Statesboro.

It is my information from them, that each of their fathers, that is, Alexander Brannen, and Irvin G. Rogers, were deacons in the Primitive Baptist Churches for more than 50 years, before they departed this life.

Bethlehem Church was constituted in 1841. Our great grandfather, Solomon Brannen, offered up the first prayer in the Church. At the time of this Constitution, our grandfather, Alex Brannen was only 14 years old. He (Alex) later joined the church and was elevated to be a deacon in his young manhood. At his death in his 82nd year, he had not had a doctor nor did he have a decayed tooth. He was tall and slim with beautiful hair. He came to our home often, and would want Sister Janie, or some of the other girls to comb his hair with a fine-toothed comb. Almost everytime we went to his home he would have a box of peppermint stick candy and would give each one a stick of the candy. He and Grandmother were fine Christian people. She enjoyed smoking her clay pipe and it did smell so good to me!

My father and mother believed in fulfilling the scriptures in more than one way. They replenished the earth by having eleven children to be grown and married, some of them having large families.

On my 80th birthday I had with me about 150 nieces and nephews, which included 4 generations.

Some of my remembrances go like this:

My father did not want to plant corn when the moon was new, believing the corn would grow too tall, and have a small ear. On the contrary, when the moon was full and began to shrink, the corn would not grow tall, but some shorter, and would have larger ears.

When he wanted to begin syrup making, he preferred to cut the cane down when it was dark nights, as he believed the roots

of the cane would sprout and make a much larger and better crop the next year.

When he wanted to dig the sweet potato crop, he would dig one or more potatoes and cut them in two pieces and lay them in the open air for at least one night. If they bled or if enough of their moisture crested or sealed the cut ends, then it was a good time to harvest them, as they would maintain their firmness and would not decay nearly as much as if harvested at other times.

Mother would not make her yearly supply of soap except the moon was full (as I remember) because she wanted the soap to firm and stay in that condition until it was used. Otherwise, it would be too soft.

Mother was able to use a forked limb (as a sling-shot fork) to locate a good spot to dig a well. When father wanted to dig an additional well, he would ask mother to go with the forked switch and walk around somewhere in the area where he wanted the well. When she passed over a good water stream under the ground, the stick would turn in her hand till the single part, or handle, would point down. Then she would say, "Here is the place to dig the well!" I was told by someone that each family of three or more, had someone who could perform the same deed. I knew a Mr. Charles Nevil of Candler County who could also do this.

When my father was almost ten years old, and The War was nearing an end, General Sherman was on his way from Atlanta to Savannah. He made a decree that all boys 10 years and under would be put to death, so my father and his mother thought it best for him to spend all the daylight hours between two large logs that had been rolled together, leaving a small tunnel between them and the ground. Had they not been very large logs, he could not have gotten between them. Oh! How cramped he must have been after staying in that position all day for several days. At night he came to his room. It was this occasion and many more very unpleasant happenings that gave him the distaste he had for the Yankees.

When the Yankees were marching through Georgia, and before they were near this territory, Grandmother Brannen told Papa to go down back of their home to a swamp and bury some salt which they had obtained by boiling the top part of the earth from the smoke house floor. This was where they had smoked the meat they had killed for their own use. It had been salted for preserving it, and the drippings from the meat had deposited a small amount of salt on the ground. This was their method of securing salt for table use. Papa took the little bag of salt, went down to the swamp and buried it the best he knew. When the Yankees came to Grandmother's house they approached from the direction of the swamp and told grandmother if she wanted her d----d salt it

was down there scattered in the swamp. The Yankees had found and destroyed all the salt the family had.

Papa had raised a little filly (a small female horse) to which he had become very much attached. While he was out in the log heap where he had spent many days, the Yankees put the gear on his little filly, and geared her up to the two wheel cart, loaded it with all the sweet potatoes it would hold and drove it down the road toward Savannah which they had declared they would capture. After the clay road gave out, they drove through the woods till they came to a ravine, and started up a sand hill. The heavy load was too much for the little filly to pull up the hill and she died from the ordeal and Papa heard what had happened.

It was in 1916, as best I remember, that I visited my Father and Mother, and Papa said he wanted us to take a walk in the woods back of his home, so in our walking, we came to the ravine mentioned above, and he asked me if I could see anything like a track or sign of anything imitating where a cart or wagon had been. After careful examination, I said it looked like some kind of a mark in the sand and a small amount of wiregrass. Then he pointed at the dim mark up the hill and said, "This is where the Yankees killed my little filly when she could not pull the load of sweet potatoes up this hill!" So, after 51 years, from 1865 to 1916, Papa remembered and wanted me to see where it took place.

EARLY MEMORIES

Some of my earliest recollections date back to 1898 when my sister, Manona, was born. In 1899, I attended my first school which was about 2 1/2 miles from home. A long way to walk on mornings and evenings!

During the school term my school teacher, Miss Susie Pridgeon, came home with us. It was the custom with teachers to visit around with the patrons, spending at least one night in each home during the school year. On our way to school the next morning, the teacher (Miss Pridgeon), my sisters, Janie and Jensie, with me tagging behind, saw a large dog down in the woods some distance away. Within a few minutes we noticed that the dog had gotten to the path we were walking in and was following us. From his looks, we decided that he was mad and very dangerous. Miss Susie took charge. She put herself between me and the dog. Miss Susie had an umbrella. She opened the umbrella just as the dog reached her and was trying to bite her. It was a long, fierce battle but she was able to keep the umbrella opened and between her and the dog. Finally the dog ran away. During all this time the three of us children had climbed up a large fallen log -- and we were almost scared to death! We had a lot to tell at school that day!

Later in the morning, the mad dog appeared at our house and tried to get through the fence crack where father and several of the boys were working. Mother could see the dog from the house but it was too far away to warn the boys. Luckily the dog could not get into the field. The dog left and went down a road where he bit a neighbor's cow and hog. The dog was later shot and killed and both the cow and the hog died. This occurrence I shall never forget!!

Father took a great deal of interest in education, as did most of our early neighbors.

Our first school house was Brannen School, which was later called Westside. Then we attended Akins School, which was about as far east of our house as was Brannen School, which was west of us. Then we formed a school in sight of our house, and because Mr. Ben Tyson gave the land for the school, it was called Tyson Grove School.

During our early years of schooling father would send us each year, but when we reached the age where we could plow, then it changed. Brothers Solomon, Lonnie and I were a team of three. One of us stayed home and plowed, while the other two were at school. The next year two stayed home and plowed, while one went to school. In this way, by the time we were about grown, each would have attended school for about six terms of some five months each, or a total of some 30 months for the entire time we spent in school before we entered out into our different vocations or livelihoods.

Pine trees had no value before the War. When a farmer needed more land for cultivation, he would cut-down his trees and burn them. One method for clearing land was to cut the large trees, roll two large logs together and place a third log on top and burn. Stacking them this way made them easier to burn.

Our saw mill was a family operation. Brother Julian or Irvin did the job of pushing the lever to saw the logs, Brother Solomon would turn the logs and Brother Lonnie or I would keep the saw dust away from the pit under the circular saw when we were sawing. The saw dust pile got so large that it covered almost half an acre. It was so hard to push that wheel barrow way up to the top of that saw dust pile! Oh yes, Uncle George Campbell (Colored), did the job of tripping slabs after the saw had cut them off the sides of the logs and dear Dad was firing the boiler to make steam to run the engine that powered all the moving machinery.

Of course, cotton ginning was done in the early part of fall and winter. At that time, Sea Island cotton was the only variety planted. It had a real long staple and was ginned on what was called a roller gin. The rollers were round and about 60 inches long, covered with tough hide

(usually walrus) which was about three-fourths of an inch thick. The hide was wrapped around the wooden roller in a twisted or running wind and had to be fastened to the roller with small wooden pegs. This was to keep it from slipping on the wooden roller.

It was about all one gin could do to separate the seed from the lint on two bales of cotton per day. We had two gins. If we began ginning before sun-up and worked until after sundown, we might gin 5 bales per day. The gins were made of iron in most part.

My how I remember the good old cold days! I can still remember trying to feed the gin (putting cotton in the gins) when the weather was 20-30 degrees, me standing near a hole in the floor where the cotton seed dropped to a lower floor and it almost impossible to stay warm, especially when I was wearing knee pants---and quite often barefooted. My how I remember the good old cold days!

When I was about seven or eight years old, Brother Solomon and I carried a wagon load of lumber to Bethlehem Church. I do not remember what they were using the lumber for, unless they were enlarging the church.

THE NEW HOUSE

I was present in 1904 when Papa and Mama employed Cousin Jim Hodges to build our new home for the price of \$575.00. This was for his labor only. We furnished our own lumber. We grew the trees, cut the timber, and sawed all the lumber at our sawmill. (This is the home where my nephew, Edwin Banks now resides.) Cousin Jim hired 17 carpenters to help him and it took them two months to finish the work. Max Scarboro was employed to paint the house. He said that he had painted the most outstanding homes in the County but that this was the best built house in the County. Of course, we boys did what we could to assist in the building of our new home. I remember helping, I was twelve years of age. I sawed the blocks of wood for the board shingles to cover the roof. The older boys in the family were handy to help in every way possible. We were all very happy to have the beautiful new home.

I remember our big fire in 1904! Brother Lester was only 5 years old and had not grown-up enough to be helpful. All our machinery buildings burned, all except the kiln dry that had most of the flooring and ceiling lumber that went into building our house. The fire was so immense it was seen for many miles. The day after the fire someone told papa that the night policeman in Statesboro said that light from our fire was so bright that he could see to tell time on his pocket watch. (Our house was located 5 miles west of town.)

When most of us boys reached middle teenage Papa gave us a small plot of land to tend for ourselves. It was about an acre and we got to keep whatever we produced. At the end of my second year, my little acreage had produced enough for me to realize \$55.00. My brother, Lonnie, and I put \$110.00 into a new buggy. But the next fall Brother Lonnie paid me \$55.00 (for my half) and helped me borrow \$25.00 more from Mr. Homer Simmons in Statesboro. And this \$80 was the amount I had when I left home for college (Georgia Normal College at Douglas) in September of 1911. I did not get any more money until after Christmas when I returned to College. It was fun to pay room rent, schooling and books. I remember paying 50 cents for bananas!

BUSINESS CAREERS

After my graduation that June, I accepted a position at Ocilla, Georgia for \$60.00 per month. (At Ocilla Oil and Fertilizer Company.) That sounded great to me, but after working there till February, 1914, I moved to Savannah under the title of Junior Accountant with a fine man named Charles Nevil, whom I had much respect for. I did not follow accounting, as I preferred different work. In the Fall of 1914, I bought half-interest in a gin from my brother, Irvin, at Pulaski.

In 1916 he and I began selling automobiles and moved to Metter in 1918. Our first agency was selling Elcars which were made in Indiana. This car did not please the public, so we took the agency for Oldsmobile. This car was beautiful and gave good service and we continued with this agency for three years.

On the first Tuesday in November, 1919, I purchased a 500 acre farm from the Estate of Mr. John M. Dekle for approximately \$44,000 -- one-fourth (down in) cash and the balance due in three annual payments of approximately \$11,000 each, plus eight percent interest. It was necessary for me to purchase all farming equipment, livestock, feed, seed, fertilizer, and everything to begin farming.

On November 23, 1919, it was my great honor and privilege to be united in marriage to Zada Bird (born Oct. 14, 1900), daughter of William Andrew Bird and Emma Watson Bird.

We began married life and farming the same month. The farm produced 53 bales of cotton in 1920. We sold 20 bales for 30 cents per pound. The price of cotton dropped so fast that the bank from which I had secured a loan--with the balance of our cotton as collateral--sold that cotton for 9 1/2 cents per pound. Our first year of farming was not profitable!! The next year (1921) was our first experience with the boll weevil. Our harvest that year was down to 12



bales of cotton. It was necessary to look for another source of income to be able to exist!

My brother, Irvin and I quit trying to sell automobiles and went to saw milling. The only hours we knew were from daylight till dark. Zada and I moved to Irvin's 35 horse farm where we butchered about 200 head of hogs and made about 500 pounds of sausage, together with all the cane syrup that was needed for the laborers of the 35 horse farm and the 10 horse farm I had bought the month we married.

In 1925, Brothers Irvin, Lester, and I purchased the Ford Car Agency, known as the S.E.S. Motor Company. Irvin had gone into the business of highway construction, so Lester and I were to operate the Ford Agency. That business was not too profitable, so we disposed of it.

Brother Solomon was operating the Farmer's Union Cotton Storage Warehouse and he asked me to help him, which I did for some time.

In 1928 I was elected to the office of Clerk of the Superior Court of Candler and Clerk of the City Courts of Metter. I was allowed to hold this office until December 31, 1936.

From 1937, Brother Solomon and I were in the cotton business as well as in fertilizer sales. In 1947, Roy A. Hendricks joined us in our business and in that year, Roy and I formed the insurance agency, known as B & H Insurance Agency.

In 1957, I sold my interest to my nephew, I. A. Brannen of Portal, Georgia.

In 1930, I bought one-half interest in the Metter Lumber Company. The other half was owned by Mr. Mark Trapnell. The next year the government came with the N.R.A. which was burdensome to our business because we were not making enough to meet our payroll. We were having to sell 2 by 4 and 4 by 4 framing for \$7.00 per thousand feet and the Number One Grade of flooring and ceiling for \$15.00 per thousand, delivered. All this was due to the terrible depression of the 1930's.

Mr. Trapnell and I divided the business in 1932. I began setting out pine seedlings on an annual basis. I did not keep an accurate account of the numbers of seedlings that I transplanted, but it was possibly 500,000 trees. I followed this business until I had every acre that I possessed growing in pines. At the peak, I had more than 2,000 acres growing trees. It was very gratifying to see what our Heavenly Father could and would do, if we gave Him the privilege and opportunity to help us.

I almost always carried an ax in my car so that I could remove any tree or sapling that was not growing as it should. Seeing my timber grow has been one of my richest blessings!!

When automobiles came in at the beginning of the 20th Century, things changed and so did our mode of travel. My father bought his first automobile about 1912.

Before the 1929 Panic started, Father acquired an interest in each of the three banks in Statesboro, however, he had only a small number of shares in each bank.

He and my mother celebrated their Golden Wedding on September 30, 1930 with all of their eleven children.

In the Spring of 1940, my father suffered a severe illness. In the Summer of that year, my brother, Solomon, his wife, Bertie, together with me and my wife, Zada, went to their daughter, Mildred's graduation at Chapel Hill, North Carolina. From there we went to the World's Fair in New York City. On our return home we stopped at the Battlefield at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. This was where one of the fiercest battles of The War Between the States took place. We had a guide to take us through the grounds to show us where the most interesting spots were located.

On our return home our father was much weaker than when we had left him. We were amazed to know that he could tell us about the battlefield. He wanted to know if we had seen certain boulders and other landmarks there. He knew more about Gettysburg than we did. He had heard the stories from the old soldiers who had fought there.

It is most difficult to record the information and acts of an individual for almost a century! It is difficult to place each occurrence in its proper place and proper time. It is my purpose to try to give information to the present generation of how things were done in the past so that they can know or imagine what generations past were confronted with and the manner of how tasks were solved and completed.

My recollections of my father, the things I saw him do, and the things he told me of his boyhood might be hard for all to understand today. His sayings were from information he had obtained from relatives or friends who were older than he. His love for his relatives who were honest and wanted to be known as such was much appreciated by him. His children were taught to count these relations as cousins and call them as such. He was sure to say, "Call them Cousin-so and so!" Many in our immediate family have continued to carry-on this tradition today.

My brother, Irvin, and sister, Janie, were very gifted

and could remember people's names and their exact relationship to us. All of us were good at this but Irvin and Janie needed no book or records.

It is because of this teaching that I am so interested in learning the relationship of most all of the acquaintances I meet till this day. Usually, if I shake hands with someone who is a cousin, I say, "Cousin Hudson Allen--or Cousin Eustace Denmark--or Cousin Ruby Anderson--or Cousin Jessie Akins--or Cousin Jack Brannen--or Cousin Lucille DeLoach." This is just the way that we were taught from childhood. I wish that it was possible to name all my cousins here. That would take many pages or books.

I did meet one cousin in Ocilla, Georgia, in 1913, who was not the type of cousin I am writing about. He was coming from Florida and was passing through Ocilla. My barber told him that I was working there so he looked me up and told me our kinship. I had never seen him before and he talked me into cashing his check for \$5.00. The check was no good! This proved that most families have at least one black sheep!!

FOOTNOTES

By Smith C. Banks

Solomon Brannen, born June 10, 1791, was the second child of William Brannen and his wife, Elizabeth Gross. Solomon married Nancy Stanford in Bulloch County on Dec. 24, 1818. They had eight children. The couple were founding members of Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church in 1841 and are buried at the Church Cemetery.

Alexander Brannen, born September 26, 1826, is the eldest son of Solomon and his wife, Nancy Stanford. Alexander married Sarah Ann Hodges on December 1, 1853. Their eldest child was James Gross Brannen, born August 11, 1855. Alexander Brannen was away fighting in The War at the time of Sherman's Army's visit to his home in 1864. Alexander was a Private in Company C, 47th Regiment, Georgia Volunteer Infantry, Army of Tennessee, Confederate States of America. Alex (as he was called) served in this unit until the surrender at Greensboro, North Carolina on April 26, 1865. He and most of the men of his company walked home to Bulloch County after the surrender. The present day site of Alexander's home place (where the Yankees visited) is in Westside and is now known as the old Pleasant Brannen home. It is owned by Jack Brannen. The back section of this house is part of the original home and is built of logs, now covered by weatherboarding. Pleasant Brannen was the youngest brother of James Gross Brannen and was Lawton Brannen's uncle.

James Gross Brannen called "Jimmy" or "Jim Alex" (he was Jim-son of Alex) was born Aug 11, 1855 and died November 19, 1941. He married Ursula Amanda Rogers, daughter of Irvin G. Rogers and Juliann DeLoach, on September 30, 1880. "Sula" was born on July 24, 1857 and died August 15, 1933. They were the parents of eleven children:

1. Julian L. Brannen, born Aug. 11, 1881-died Sept. 13, 1963; married Pearl Lanier on March 17, 1907.
2. Irvin Alexander Brannen, born Dec. 6, 1882-died Nov. 5, 1957; married Carrie M. Brinson on June 25, 1925.
3. Ann Jane "Janie" Brannen, born Sept. 9, 1884-died April 12, 1970; married Charles M. Anderson on Dec. 11, 1904.
4. Sarah Juliann "Annie" Brannen, born April 12, 1886-died March 22, 1944; married David Callaway Banks on Dec. 23, 1906.
5. James Solomon Brannen, born Dec. 13, 1887-died May 14, 1975; married Bertie Franklin on Dec. 28, 1913.
6. Joseph Alonzo "Lonnie" Brannen, born Oct. 27, 1889-died Sept. 21, 1960; married Ethel T. Womack on Jan. 22, 1913.
7. Jensie Bell Brannen, born Mar. 29, 1891-died May 28, 1964; married William Woodrum on Sept. 30, 1917.
8. William Lawton Brannen, born Feb. 4, 1893-died March 28, 1991; married Zada Bird on Nov. 23, 1919.
9. Eula Mae Brannen, born Feb. 19, 1895-died Mar. 9, 1985; married Thomas B. Swinson on April 21, 1920; married second, Frank Collins on Aug. 16, 1973.
10. Mary Manona Brannen, born Oct. 30, 1897-died Jan 28, 1979; married Lewis A. Akins on Nov. 7, 1915.
11. Orren Lester Brannen, born Nov. 9, 1899-died Dec. 15, 1972; married Ruby Parrish on Aug. 10, 1925.

Today the James Gross Brannen family homeplace is known as the "Banks Place" on Banks Dairy Road. It is the home of Edwin D. Banks, grandson of James Gross Brannen.

Lawton Brannen was honored on February 2, 1987 when Statesboro's Mayor Thurman Lanier presented him with Honorary Citizenship in the City of Statesboro. The presentation was made in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

At the same time Dr. Kemp Mabry read the following resolution from the Bulloch County Historical Society:

A RESOLUTION HONORING WILLIAM LAWTON BRANNEN

WHEREAS, Mr. William Lawton Brannen, citizen of Metter, Georgia, and member of the Bulloch County Historical Society, will celebrate his birthday on Wednesday, February 4, 1987, and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lawton Brannen was born in Bulloch County and has resided for almost all of his long life in that portion of Bulloch County known as Candler County since 1914.

WHEREAS, Mr. Lawton Brannen has distinguished himself and his family as an astute businessman with extraordinary vision in accounting, automobile sales, construction industry, cotton ginning, farming, insurance, public service as superior court clerk, pine tree farming sensitive to conservation of wildlife and timber, saw milling, and warehousing, and

WHEREAS, He has exhibited a rare commitment to his own First Baptist Church of Metter and to the world mission of the church through active involvement and support to the extent of personal visits to mission fields in South and Central America, Mexico, Alaska and Hawaii as well as the support of Baptist Village at Waycross, Georgia, and

WHEREAS, He has vigorously pursued the cause of Education through his support and participation in the work of Brewton Parker College, Shorter College, Tift College, and Georgia Southern College, and

WHEREAS, He has received numerous awards for civic service including the Boy Scouts of America, Kiwanis International, Masonic Orders, the Sportsmen's Club, Shriners, and the staff of Governor Carl Sanders, and

WHEREAS, Several years ago he donated the genealogy collection assembled by his late beloved wife, Zada Bird Brannen, to the Statesboro Regional Library, and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Lawton Brannen has most recently provided the challenge and leadership to construct the expansion of the Brannen Room for Local History and Genealogy at Statesboro Regional Library, to be available to and enjoyed by all citizens.

THEREFORE,

We, the undersigned officers and members of the

Board of Directors of the Bulloch County Historical Society, Inc., direct that this Resolution honoring MR. WILLIAM LAWTON BRANNEN be published in commemoration of his 94th birthday on February 4, 1987. To this end, we have hereunto set our hand and seal this 2nd day of February, 1987.

Lawton Brannen died on Thursday, March 28, 1991 in Metter, Georgia. He was 98 years old. He is buried beside his wife, Zada, at the Lake Church Cemetery.



PHOTO IDENTIFICATION

The James Gross Brannen Family At Home In 1911 (center)

(From Left to Right)

Manona Brannen; "Lonnie" Brannen; Solomon Brannen; Mrs. Julian (Pearl Lanier) Brannen; Julian Brannen, holding Annie Laurie Brannen; Aulbert Brannen; James G. Brannen-"Papa"; Mrs. Alexander (Sara Ann Hodges) Brannen, mother of Mr. Brannen; Lawton Brannen; Lester Brannen; Mrs. Ervin G.(Juliann DeLoach) Rogers (mother of Mrs. Brannen); Mrs. James G. (Ursula Amanda Rogers) Brannen-"Mama"; Irvin Brannen; Eula Brannen; Mrs. "Janie" Brannen Anderson; Verna Anderson; Charles M. Anderson; Little Perman Anderson; Jensie Brannen; Mrs. "Annie" Brannen Banks; Osborne Banks; David C. Banks, holding Lonnie Banks.

Mr. & Mrs. James Gross Brannen and Children Golden Wedding Celebration on September 30, 1930

(From Left to Right-Seated) Julian Brannen; James Gross Brannen; Mrs. Brannen; Irvin Brannen. (From Left to Right-Standing) Lester Brannen; Manona Brannen Akins; Eula Brannen Swinson; Lawton Brannen; Jensie Brannen Woodrum; Lonnie Brannen; Solomon Brannen; Annie Brannen Banks; Janie Brannen Anderson.

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Bulloch County Historical Society

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